

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
Washington, DC 20405

January 30, 1991

FIRMR BULLETIN C-13

TO: Heads of Federal agencies

SUBJECT: Management of long distance telephone service

1. Purpose. This bulletin provides guidance concerning the management, use, and control of long distance telephone services.

2. Expiration date. This bulletin contains information of a continuing nature and will remain in effect until canceled.

3. Contents.

Topic	Paragraph
Related material.....	4
Information and assistance.....	5
Definition.....	6
Discussion.....	7
Agency responsibilities.....	8
GSA responsibilities.....	9
Cancellation.....	10
Examples of Calls Necessary in the Interest of the Government.....	Attachment A

4. Related material.

- a. FIRMR 201-21.601
- b. FPMR 101-2.1
- c. 31 USC 1348 Telephone installation and charges
- d. FTS2000 Agency Reference Guides (Network A or B)

5. Information and assistance. To obtain FTS2000 call detail report information, reference guides, or other information pertaining to this bulletin contact:

- a. FTS2000 Network A Customer Services Branch
Telephone FTS 393-7530 or (703) 760-7530
- b. FTS2000 Network B Customer Services Branch
Telephone FTS 393-2922 or (703) 904-2922

TC 90-1

Attachment

6. Definition. "Call detail report (CDR)" means a record of long distance telephone calls showing, the originating number; destination number; city, and state; date and time of day the call was made; and the duration of the call.

7. Discussion. GSA provides both local and long distance telecommunication services to meet the requirements of Federal Agencies. Regulations governing the use of GSA-provided systems or services and other Government-provided long distance networks are described in FIRMR 201-21.601.

8. Agency responsibilities.

a. General. Each agency should ensure that--

(1) Arrangements have been established to verify usage of the long distance services for which it is charged, i.e., that calls were made; see FPMR 101-2.1.

(2) Government-provided long distance networks are used only for official business, emergency calls, and calls the agency considers necessary in the interest of the Government. Agencies should develop guidelines that incorporate FIRMR policies and provide examples of calls that may be considered necessary in the interest of the Government; see Attachment A. Note--It is reasonable to presume that calls are official if they are completed to Federal agency offices; therefore, agency effort to comply with 31 USC 1348 should be directed to the remaining calls.

(3) Commercial long distance calls are permitted only when Government provided service is not available and only when such calls are for official business. (Commercial long distance bills must be certified in accordance with 31 USC 1348.)

(4) CDR information is properly safeguarded and managed; see Privacy Act guidance referenced in paragraph 6d.

(5) The appropriate level of service (e.g., standard, commercial, government, or national) is furnished each employee.

(6) Where there is a large quantity of official collect calls, the use of IN-WATS or 800 numbers is considered.

(7) Limitations and controls over the issuance of telephone authorization codes or calling cards are established and an annual validation of the continued need for these cards is conducted. (These calls must be certified in accordance with 31 USC 1348.)

FIRMR Bulletin C-13

(8) Unofficial audio text calls (e.g., dial-a-joke, dial-a-horoscope) are blocked where technically feasible. GSA has blocked the FTS2000 network access to "900" calls.

(9) The feasibility of using authorization or access codes for long distance telephone calls is considered.

b. Call detail. Each Agency should establish a call detail report program. The analysis of call detail will provide agencies with information needed to verify usage, distribute cost within the agency, and detect and deter possible abuse of long distance services. The analysis may reveal calling patterns such as:

(1) Inappropriate or recurring calls particularly to non-Government telephone numbers.

(2) Recurring calls placed outside normal business hours.

(3) Excessively long calls.

(4) Calls charged to the wrong organization.

Note-- GSA believes it is not cost effective to collect, process, review, and store 100% CDR even if the cost to obtain the data is quite low as would typically be the case when acquiring a new local service switch. GSA intends to provide automatic number identification (ANI) at consolidated locations. Agencies should consider ANI at their exclusive locations.

Note--Initially the Government will not be able to provide originating telephone numbers to FTS2000 contractors at some locations in order for these contractors to identify the originating number on the CDR record. Agency employees at those locations need to verify that the calls were made and were official by other means. The October 26, 1989 memo to the FTS2000 Coordinators provides guidance on ways to verify FTS2000 invoices.

c. Call detail examples. Agency policies and procedures that could result from an analysis of CDR data include--

(1) Ensuring that employees know that long distance charges directly affect program cost.

(2) Removing long distance capability from certain telephones.

FIRMR Bulletin C-13

(3) Electronically blocking audio text or other unofficial calls.

(4) Establishing 800 calling capability.

(5) Reporting improperly charged calls to GSA for resolution with the FTS2000 contractor.

d. Privacy Act. Agencies need to consider the Office of Management and Budget's "Guidance on the Privacy Act Implications of Call Detail Programs to Manage Employees' Use of the Government's Telecommunication System" (See FEDERAL REGISTER, 52 FR 12990, April 20, 1987).

e. Freedom of Information Act. Agencies need to ensure that rules implementing the Freedom of Information Act 5 USC 552 are complied with regarding the information in a CDR; i.e., whether the information may be disclosed or whether an exemption to disclosure applies.

f. Records. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), General Records Schedule 12 applies to call detail records.

g. Misuse. Each agency should ensure that personnel are aware that telephone misuse is covered by--

(1) Office of Personnel Management and agency regulations regarding disciplinary actions and collection efforts that will be taken against Federal Employees who misuse Government property or services (see 5 CFR 735.205); and

(2) Criminal statutes dealing with the misuse of Government property or services.

9. GSA responsibilities.

a. GSA will--

(1) Resolve agency billing disputes with its FTS2000 contractors.

(2) Provide CDR program guidance upon request.

(3) Administer telecommunications technical support contracts for use by Federal agencies in establishing telephone management and accountability programs.

FIRMR Bulletin C-13

(4) Provide agencies with a CDR sampling methodology, (or agencies may develop their own plan,) that will help determine that long distance calls were made and were for official business.

b. CDR information on local calls is not available from GSA, and GSA does not recommend that agencies obtain and analyze information on local calls to detect employee misuse.

10. Cancellation. FIRMR Bulletin 50 is canceled.

Thomas J. Buckholtz
Commissioner
Information Resources
Management Service

FIRMR Bulletin C-13
Attachment A

Examples of Calls
Necessary in the Interest of the Government

Use of Government provided long distance telephone systems and services are for the conduct of official business. Official business calls may include emergency calls and other calls the agency determines are necessary in the interest of the Government. Agencies should not install additional telephone equipment or increase levels of service on existing telephones merely to accommodate circumstances for these calls. Examples of such calls are:

1. Calls to home or doctor if an employee is injured or becomes sick at work.
2. An employee traveling on Government business is delayed by business or transportation problems and calls to notify family.
3. An employee traveling on Government business in the United States makes a brief call home but not more than an average of one call per day. Note--Federal agencies that require employees to travel outside the United States may wish to implement similar guidance.
4. An employee is required to work overtime without advance notice and calls within the local commuting area to advise family of the change in schedule or to make alternative transportation or child care arrangements.
5. An employee makes a brief daily call to a location within the local commuting area to speak to a spouse or minor children or those responsible for the children.
6. An employee makes brief calls to locations within the local commuting area that can be reached only during working hours, such as a local government agency, bank or physician.
7. An employee makes brief calls to locations within the local commuting area to arrange for emergency repairs to home or car.

